



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

1400 So. 19th
Bozeman, MT 59718

February 18, 1998

TO: Governor's Office, Julie Lapeyre, Room 204, State Capitol, POB 200801, Helena, MT 59620-0801
Environmental Quality Council, Capitol Building, Room 106, POB 201704, Helena, MT 59620
Dept. Environmental Quality, Metcalf Building, POB 200901, Helena, MT 59620-0901
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Director's Office
Enforcement - Karen Zackheim
Wildlife Division
Legal Unit
FWP Commissioners
Dennis Flath

MT Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, POB 201202, Helena, MT 59620-1202
MT State Parks Association, POB 699, Billings, MT 59103
MT State Library, 1515 E. Sixth Ave., POB 201800, Helena, MT 59620
James Jensen, Montana Environmental Information Center, POB 1184, Helena, MT 59624
Janet Ellis, Montana Audubon Council, POB 595, Helena, MT 59624
George Ochenski, POB 689, Helena, MT 59624
Gallatin County Commissioners, Gallatin County Courthouse, Bozeman MT 59715
Jerry DiMarco, POB 1571, Bozeman, MT 59771
Wildlife Federation, POB 1175, Helena, MT 59624
Wayne Hurst, POB 728, Libby, MT 59923
Glen Hockett, 745 Doane Road, Bozeman, MT 59715
Skyline Sportsman's Association, POB 173, Butte, MT 59701
Anaconda Sportsman's Club, #2 Cherry, Anaconda, MT 59711
Jefferson Valley Sportsman's Association, POB 663, Whitehall, MT 59759
Prickly Pear Sportsman's Association, 1721 Virginia Dale St., Helena, MT 59601

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The enclosed Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared for the Sabol Shooting Preserve located in Bridger Canyon, approximately one mile south of the Jackson Creek turnoff. This draft EA is submitted for your consideration. Questions and comments will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. on March 20, 1998. Please direct any comments to: Sabol Shooting Preserve, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, 1400 So. 19th, Bozeman, MT 59718.

Sincerely,

Stephen L. Lewis

Stephen L. Lewis
Regional Supervisor

Gallatin

DRAFT

MEPA/NEPA/HB495 CHECKLIST

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. Type of Proposed State Action Shooting Preserve
2. Agency Authority for the Proposed Action Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
3. Name of Project Sabol Shooting Preserve
4. Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor (if other than the agency)

Joseph W. Sabol II
8440 Bridger Canyon Road
Bozeman, MT 59715

5. If Applicable:

Estimated Construction/Commencement Date Date of issue of permit
Estimated Completion Date N/A
Current Status of Project Design (% complete) N/A

6. Location Affected by Proposed Action (county, range and township)

Gallatin County R7E, T1S Section 29

7. Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:

(a) Developed:	(d) Floodplain
residential	_____ acres
industrial	_____ acres
(b) Open Space/Woodlands/ Recreation	(e) Productive:
_____ <u>3</u> acres	irrigated cropland
	dry cropland
	forestry
(c) Wetlands/Riparian Areas	rangeland
_____ <u>6</u> acres	other
	_____ acres

8. Map/site plan: attach an original 8 ½" x 11" or larger section of the most recent USGS 7.5' series topographic map showing the location and boundaries of the area that would be affected by the proposed action. A different map scale may be substituted if more appropriate or if required by agency rule. If available, a site plan should also be attached.

See Attachment

9. Narrative Summary of the Proposed Action or Project including the Benefits and Purpose of the Proposed Action.

The proposed action is the issuance of a shooting preserve permit which will authorize the shooting of pheasants seven months each year. It will also authorize the release of captive reared pheasants. Existing land use will not be affected.

10. Listing of any other Local, State or Federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction.

(a) Permits:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>	<u>Date Filed/#</u>
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N/A

(b) Funding:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
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N/A

(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Type of Responsibility</u>
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N/A

11. List of Agencies Consulted During Preparation of the EA:

None

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. <u>LAND RESOURCES</u>	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
► a. Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?		X				
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil which would reduce productivity or fertility?		X				
► c. Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		X				
d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				
f. Other _____						

* include an attachment with a narrative explanation describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

2. <u>AIR</u>	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
► a. Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (also see 13 (c))		X				
b. Creation of objectionable odors?		X				
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		X				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		X				
e. ♦For P-R/D-J projects, will the project result in any discharge which will conflict with federal or state air quality regs? (Also see 2a)		X				
f. Other _____						

* include an attachment with a narrative explanation describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Air Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- ◀ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- ♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- ♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

3. <u>WATER</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant		
► a. Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?		X				
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?		X				
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of flood water or other flows?		X				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding?		X				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		X				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		X				
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		X				
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		X				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		X				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		X				
l. ♦♦For P-R/D-J, will the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c)		X				
m. ♦For P-R/D-J, will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a)		X				
n. Other: _____						

* include an attachment with a narrative explanation describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- ⚙ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- ♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- ♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

4. <u>VEGETATION</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant		
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?		X				
b. Alteration of a plant community?		X				
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		X				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?		X				
f. ♦♦For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?		X				
g. Other: _____						

* include an attachment with a narrative explanation describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Vegetation Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

► Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)

♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

► 5. <u>FISH/WILDLIFE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant		
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		X				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?			X			See 5b. Below
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?		X				
d. Introduction of new species into an area?			X			See 5d. Below
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		X				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?		X				
h. ♦♦For P-R/D-J, will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f)			X			See 5h. Below
i. ♦For P-R/D-J, will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d)			X			See 5i. Below
j. Other: <u>Spread of avian disease</u>			X			See 5j. Below

* include an attachment with a narrative explanation describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Fish/Wildlife Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

5b. If pheasants survive and reproduce locally it would potentially increase the diversity and abundance of game birds. Presently, pheasants occur only very rarely in the vicinity.

5d. Release of pheasants would represent a local introduction of a new species. Over the years pheasants have been released on private property in several locations in Gallatin County. There has been no long term success for this species with regard to survival or natural reproduction in this area of Bridger Canyon.

5h. The project is located within a section of the Bridger Mountain corridor that is used by migrant and resident bald eagles. There is no indicator that this project will affect bald eagles or their habitat.

5i. Ring-necked pheasants have been introduced occasionally in Bridger Canyon by local residents, but their numbers are low at best and fluctuate with severity of seasonal weather.

5j. There is a small possibility of the spread of infectious avian disease from captive reared bird populations to their wild counterparts. In this location this possibility is all but eliminated by the fact that there is no local population of native pheasants.

⚙ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

► Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)

♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant		
a. Increases in existing noise levels?			X			See 6a. Below
b. Exposure of people & severe or nuisance noise levels?		X				
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		X				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		X				
e. Other: _____						

* include an attachment with a narrative explanation describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Noise/Electrical Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

6a. There could be additional noise associated with hunting game birds, i.e. discharge of shotguns. The area already supports big game hunting with rifles.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

7. <u>LAND USE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?		X				
b. Conflict with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?		X				
e. Other: _____						

* include an attachment with a narrative explanation describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)

Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

8. <u>RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS</u>	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?		X				
b. An existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or create a need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		X				
d. ♦For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a)		X				
e. Other: _____						

* include an attachment with a narrative explanation describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Risk/Health Hazards (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

9. <u>COMMUNITY IMPACT</u>	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		X				
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		X				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?		X				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?		X				
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?		X				
f. Other: _____						

* include an attachment with a narrative explanation describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluation.

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Community Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- ⚙ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- ▶ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- ♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- ♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

10. <u>PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant		
a. An effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify:			X			See 10a. Below
b. An effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?		X				
c. A need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		X				
d. Increased use of any energy source?		X				
▶ e. Define projected revenue sources		X				
▶ f. Define projected maintenance costs.		X				
g. Other: _____						

* include an attachment with a narrative explanation describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluation.

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Public Services/Taxes/Utilities (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

10a. Additional need for fish and wildlife law enforcement may occur if hunting trespass increases as a result of pheasants being visible along highway.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

▶ 11. <u>AESTHETICS/RECREATION</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?		X				
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?		X				
▶ c. Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report)		X				
d. ♦For P-R/D-J, will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted? (Also see 11a, 11c)		X				
e. Other: _____						

* include an attachment with a narrative explanation describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluation.

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Aesthetics/Recreation (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)

Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

12. <u>CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT [*]				Can Impact Be Mitigated [*]	Comment Index
	Unknown [*]	None	Minor [*]	Potentially Significant		
a. Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric historic, or paleontological importance?		X				
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?		X				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. ♦♦For P-R/D-J, will the project affect historic or cultural resources? Attach SHPO letter of clearance. (Also see 12.a)		X				
e. Other: _____						

* include an attachment with a narrative explanation describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluation.

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Cultural/Historical Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

13. <u>SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE</u> Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:	IMPACT [*]				Can Impact Be Mitigated [*]	Comment Index
	Unknown [*]	None	Minor [*]	Potentially Significant		
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources which create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)		X				
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		X				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?		X				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		X				
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?			X			See 13e. Below
f. ♦For P-R/D-J, is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e)		X				
g. ♦♦For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required.						

* include an attachment with a narrative explanation describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

13e. Some previous shooting preserves have received negative comments from groups or individuals who have a philosophical aversion to release and hunt operations. There might be some opposition from nearby neighbors.

- ☆ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- ▶ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- ♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- ♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

2. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:

No action alternative - deny permit. State law lists the requirements for being issued a shooting preserve permit. If an applicant satisfies those requirements, we are required to issue the permit.

3. Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency:

None

4. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? YES / NO If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action:

No, this proposal has very little physical impact on the property.

5. Describe the level of public involvement for this project if any and, given the complexity and the seriousness of the environmental issues associated with the proposed action, is the level of public involvement appropriate under the circumstances?

Legal notice will be in the Bozeman Daily Chronicle. Local neighbors will be personally contacted and encouraged to comment. Copies of the EA will be sent to involved public agencies, private organizations and individuals who have expressed an interest in receiving them.

6. Duration of comment period if any:

The duration of the comment period will be 30 days. Comments will be accepted until 5:00 p.m., March 20, 1998. Send comments to: Sabol Shooting Preserve, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, 1400 So. 19th, Bozeman, MT 59718.

7. Name, title, address and phone number of the Person(s) Responsible for Preparing the EA:

Harold Whitney - Wildlife Research Specialist
Jim Heck - Game Warden
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
1400 So. 19th
Bozeman, MT 59718

406-994-4042

PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

This project involves the release of artificially raised pheasants for immediate hunting on a privately owned shooting preserve. Current land use practices will not be altered nor will any development occur as a result of the issuing of this permit.

The preserve will be private and use will be limited to the owner and his guests.

Pheasants are not currently found in this area due to heavy snowfall and lack of suitable habitat. This eliminates problems of competition between native and introduced birds as well as the risk of the spread of disease.



